

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 0605

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XA, XB, XR, YA, RO, MT, UN

SUBJ: NON-ALIGNED ACTIVITIES IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

REF: STATE 099106

1. REFTEL HIGHLIGHTS BASIC CONTRADICTIONS IN U.S. POLICIES
TOWARD LDCS.

2. MOST OF NACG IS COMPOSED OF LDCS AND MOST LDCS WHO
ARE NOT ALREADY NON-ALIGNED ARE FAST BECOMING SO. WE ARE
DEALING ESSENTIALLY, THEREFORE, WITH LDCS. IN THIS
CONNECTION WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THREE OVERRIDING FACTORS
WHICH DETERMINE POSTURE OF LDCS:

A. THEY ARE FIRST AND FOREMOST INTERESTED IN ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND TANGIBLE ECONOMIC BENEFITS;

B. THEY BELIEVE THAT BY BLOC VOTING THEY HAVE
BETTER CHANCE OF BRINGING PRESSURE TO THEIR OWN
ADVANTAGE ON MAJOR POWERS WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE TEND TO
NEGLECT THEM INDIVIDUALLY; AND

C. FEW IF ANY WISH TO BREAK WITH GROUP FOR FEAR OF
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BEING OSTRACIZED AND CONDEMNED BY THEIR PEERS.

3. IT FOLLOWS THAT LOGICAL ARGUMENTS AND EFFORTS AT PERSUASION WHILE DESIRABLE WILL HAVE ONLY LIMITED EFFECT ON BEHAVIOR OF LDCS. MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH WOULD BE TO (A) GIVE BILATERAL AID TO INDIVIDUAL LDCS IN QUID PRO QUO FASHION WHICH THEY WOULD UNDERSTAND (COMBINING, OF COURSE, SUCH OFFERS WITH LOFTY RATIONALE OF MUTUAL INTERESTS AND IDEALS) AND (B) DIRECT OUR ACTIONS TO A GROUP OF COUNTRIES CAREFULLY CHOSEN WHO COULD ACT JOINTLY THEREBY REDUCING THE FEAR OF ANY ONE COUNTRY APPEARING TO ACT ALONE.

4. A GOOD ILLUSTRATION OF HOW THIS CAN WORK IS THE SUCCESS FRANCE HAS ENJOYED OVER PAST 14 YEARS IN AFRICA. DESPITE SELLING ARMS TO SOUTH AFRICA, SUPPORTING BIAFRA, AND EVEN SENDING FRENCH TROOPS TO INTERVENE IN LOCAL AFRICAN AFFAIRS, FRANCE HAS RARELY BEEN CRITICIZED IN THE UN BY AFRICANS. THE REASON IS SIMPLY THAT FRANCE HAS USED ITS BILATERAL AID SKILLFULLY AND TO MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE. FRENCH LEADERS HAVE OPENLY SCOFFED AT MULTINATIONAL AID AND CONCENTRATED ON DOLING OUT THEIR AID FOR MAXIMUM POLITICAL RETURNS.

5. THE U.S. HAS, ON THE CONTRARY, BEEN MOVING STEADILY AND RAPIDLY AWAY FROM BILATERAL AID (AS FAR AS SMALL LDCS CONCERNED) IN FAVOR OF CHANNELING AID THROUGH MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND TO SOME EXTENT REGIONAL AID (WHICH ALL TOO OFTEN IS IMPRACTICAL OR INEFFECTIVE). THERE ARE, OF COURSE, VALID ARGUMENTS FOR SUCH A POLICY. IT CAN BE SAID TO BE MORE LOGICAL, MORE EQUITABLE, LESS DEMEANING ON THE RECIPIENT. IT AVOIDS THE STIGMA OF ATTEMPTING TO "BUY FRIENDS." IT IS POPULAR WITH SOME SENATORS AND WITH CERTAIN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. IT WON'T ACCOMPLISH GOAL OF REFTEL, BUT I HAVE FEW ILLUSIONS THAT IT WILL BE CHANGED.

6. IT DOES SEEM SOMEWHAT DISINGENUOUS, HOWEVER, TO ASK POSTS HOW BEST TO "ENCOURAGE RECEPTIVITY TO U.S. APPROACHES AND MORE INDEPENDENT POSITIONS WITHIN NACG" WHEN WE VOLUNTARILY CHOOSE NOT TO USE OUR MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPON.

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